

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3 and 5-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,297,788 to Sterki et al. ("Sterki et al.").

Claims 4 and 8-13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowed by the Examiner if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In order to overcome the objection to Claim 8, Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of Claim 8 as suggested by the Examiner. Claim 8 has been cancelled accordingly. In addition, Claim 9 has been amended to make it depend from amended Claim 1 rather than from cancelled Claim 8. Please note that Claim 8 has been cancelled without prejudice in order to expedite prosecution of this application. The Applicant reserves the right to pursue this cancelled claim in a continuing application or otherwise.

Having amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 8, the Applicant believes that Claim 1 is now patentable over the Sterki et al. reference. In addition, the Applicant believes that Claims 2-7 and 9-13 being dependent on amended Claim 1 are now also patentable over the Sterki et al. reference.

In view of the Examiner's comments with respect to Claim 4, new independent Claim 14 has been added. New Claim 14 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1-4, as suggested by the Examiner. As new Claim 14 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1-4, the Applicant believes that new Claim 14 is patentable over the Sterki et al. reference.

In view of the Examiner's comments with respect to Claim 12, new independent Claim 15 has been added. New Claim 15 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1 and 12 as suggested by the Examiner. As new Claim 15 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1 and 12, the Applicant believes that new Claim 15 is patentable over the Sterki et al. reference.

In view of the Examiner's comments with respect to Claim 13, new independent Claim 16 has been added. New Claim 16 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1 and 13 as

suggested by the Examiner. As new Claim 16 includes the relevant limitations of original Claims 1 and 13, the Applicant believes that new Claim 16 is patentable over the Sterki et al. reference.

No new matter has been entered by these amendments.

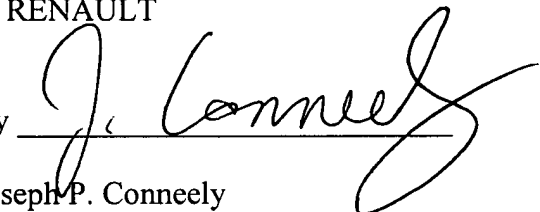
The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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